

## SEPA IWG Meeting Summary

### Tuesday, July 8, 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Foster Pepper, 1111 Third Avenue, Suite 3400, Seattle, WA 98104

#### Attendance

##### Co-Leads:

Dick Settle	Foster Pepper
Jeannie Summerhays	Washington Department of Ecology

##### Members and Alternates:

Jayson Antonoff	City of Seattle, Dept of Planning & Development
Megan Blanck-Weiss*	Futurewise
Sean Cryan	Mithun
Ann Farr**	Washington Public Ports Association
Kari-lynn Frank	National Association of Industrial and Office Properties
Hilary Franz	Bainbridge City Council
Craig Gannett***	Davis Wright Tremaine, LLP
Valerie Grigg Devis	Dept. of Community, Trade, and Economic Development
Jennifer Dold	Bricklin, Newman, Dold, LLP
Mark Kulaas	Douglas County
Dan McGrady	Vulcan
T.C. Richmond	GordenDerr Attorneys at Law
Michael Robinson-Dorn	UW Law School
Tayloe Washburn	Foster Pepper
Perry Weinberg	Sound Transit
Jim Wilder	Jones & Stokes
Clay White (on phone)	Stevens County
Megan White	Washington Department of Transportation

*\*Alternate for Tim Trohimovich, Futurewise*

*\*\*Alternative for John Mohr, Port of Everett*

*\*\*\*Alternate for Greg Carrington, Chelan PUD*

##### Absent:

Gregg Carrington	Chelan PUD (Alternate present)
Connie Krueger	City of Leavenworth
Jim Lopez, Co-lead	King County
Bill Messenger	Washington Labor Council
John Mohr	Port of Everett (Alternate present)
Kristen Sawin	Weyerhaeuser
Tim Trohimovich	Futurewise (Alternate present)
David Troutt	Nisqually Tribe

##### Others:

Tom Beierle	Ross & Associates Environmental Consulting, Ltd.
Patty Betts	Washington Department of Natural Resources
Roma Call	Ross & Associates Environmental Consulting, Ltd.

Andy Cook	Building Industry Association of Washington
Maya Dietz	King County Executive Office
Susan Drummond	Foster Pepper
Simon Kihia (by phone)	Washington Department of Natural Resources
Matt Kuharic	King County
Brendan McFarland	Washington Department of Ecology
Jonathan Olds	Washington Department of Transportation, Ferries
Carry Porter	Washington Attorney General's Office
Carol Lee Roalkvam	Washington Department of Transportation
Gail Sandlin (by phone)	Washington Department of Ecology
Annie Szvetcz	Washington Department of Ecology
Mia Waters	Washington Department of Transportation
Laura Watson	Washington Attorney General's Office

**Background Documents available online at**

[http://www.ecy.wa.gov/climatechange/2008CAT\\_iwg\\_sepa.htm](http://www.ecy.wa.gov/climatechange/2008CAT_iwg_sepa.htm)

**Discussion Items and Key Issues**

1. Welcome and Introductions
  - 1.1. Tom Beierle welcomed members, technical staff and the public to the meeting.
  - 1.2. All members and staff introduced themselves.
  - 1.3. SEPA IWG Co-Leads Dick Settle and Jeannie Summerhays thanked members and technical staff for their hard work and good attitude. They reminded the group that the Co-leads do not have any agendas for the outcome of the process and would like to hear the groups' ideas.
2. Climate Action Team and Working Group Updates
  - 2.1. The Co-leads reported that the CAT Co-chairs requested a memo from the Co-leads to understand how the IWG's are focusing their work.
  - 2.2. The Co-leads summarized the draft memo that they have developed. The memo describes workgroup goals, including: 1) making SEPA clear and predictable when it comes to climate, and 2) recommending ways to use SEPA to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The memo explains that all work identified in the SEPA IWG workplan is important, but the group has developed a set of priorities and sequencing steps as principles for focusing their work.
  - 2.3. A copy of the final memo will be provided to the group.
  - 2.4. Tom presented a brief update on the work of the Transportation IWG and Tayloe Washburn presented an update on the work of the Land Use & Climate Change Advisory Committee. An IWG member requested that the group also hear updates on work of the Energy Efficiency/Green Building IWG at a future meeting.
3. Overview of SEPA IWG Decision-making
  - 3.1. Co-lead Dick Settle described the decision-making process for the SEPA IWG. He reminded the group that this process is not following a strict consensus-based model, although it will seek broad support for proposals.
  - 3.2. Dick reminded the group that it is advisory to the CAT. He said that at some point it may be necessary to vote in order to make decisions. The Co-leads will identify when the group should vote. At that time the group will count the votes and report to the CAT on the level of support

and rationale. The group will move forward based on the majority opinion. Short of voting, the Co-leads or facilitator may take “straw polls” or use other means to get a general sense of the group on issues.

- 3.3. An IWG member asked that the Co-leads include any upcoming decisions in the meeting agenda so that members can be prepared to vote. Another member suggested that all views be presented in an options document so that members can review them.
- 3.4. Tom said the he and the co-leads would develop a short written description of the voting process that would be provided to the group.

#### 4. What Emissions Should We Measure?

- 4.1. Sean Cryan, assisted by Annie Szvetcz, Mark Kulaas, Carol Lee Roalkvam, Patty Betts, and Jim Wilder, gave a presentation on the question of what types of emissions should be measured for projects and non-projects.
- 4.2. In subsequent discussion about what emissions to measure, the SEPA IWG discussed the following topics:
  - What aspects of a project’s “lifecycle” to include—such as construction, operation, and maintenance; subsequent discussions dealt with what timeframe to include in the measurement (e.g., how many years of operation will be included?) and whether certain aspects of the lifecycle could be exempted from measurement for certain kinds of projects;
  - The issue of double-counting, especially for “Scope 3” emissions, which deal with the embodied emissions in products, etc.;
  - How the question of what we measure relates to the question of what emissions proponents are accountable for when it comes to mitigation;
  - Whether emissions should be measured as per-capita or total emissions;
  - How emissions that relate to ongoing operation of something like a building can be measured and evaluated if we don’t know the use to which the building will be put;
  - Whether measurement should include considerations of the creation and destruction of sinks (thereby making the metric “net emissions”);
  - Whether measurement should include “avoided emissions” (e.g., a utility switching to solar or wind power) and whether actions to avoid emissions should be counted compared to some type of “business as usual” baseline;
  - How to measure redevelopment (e.g., what is the baseline for measuring the “delta”); and
  - How to deal with uncertainty and assumptions in measurement, especially if we seek to measure a broad range of emission types.
- 4.3. Participants offered some potential approaches to choosing what types of emissions to measure, including selecting those that are:
  - Relatively easy to measure (e.g., data is available);
  - Correspond to key “leverage points” that represent large opportunities for emissions reductions; and/or
  - Are comparable enough that they can be aggregated into a single measure of emissions.
- 4.4. One member suggested that the group look for “bright boundaries” around certain types of emissions that would suggest a natural grouping of emissions types.
- 4.5. In discussing general areas of agreement, there was a “sense of the group” that the IWG’s consideration of greenhouse gas impacts should focus on measuring net emissions of greenhouse gases (including both sources and sinks).
- 4.6. The group discussed what types of emissions should be measured, with some members supporting a “go broad” approach of measuring a wide variety of emission types and other

members favoring a “go narrow” approach that would focus on a smaller list of emissions types. One difference between the approaches, it was suggested, was the relative level of uncertainty for emissions that are more difficult to quantify.

- 4.7. As a homework assignment, the IWG agreed to further describe and discuss the “go broad” and “go narrow” options.

## 5. Tools for Measuring Greenhouse Gas Emissions

- 5.1. SEPA IWG members Megan White and Jim Wilder described existing tools for measuring greenhouse gas emissions and presented a draft summary table of available tools.
- 5.2. Members discussed the types of functionality that would be useful in a tool or set of tools:
- Works for greenhouse gas inventories;
  - Works for greenhouse gas prediction/forecasting;
  - Measures greenhouse gas reductions from mitigation activities;
  - Measures greenhouse gas sinks;
  - Minimizes double counting; and
  - Can be use for project and/or non-projects.
- 5.3. Members also discussed other desirable characteristics of a tool and/or information that would be useful to have about a tool:
- Accuracy/effectiveness;
  - Ease of use;
  - Cost to obtain/use the tool and appropriateness of the costs to the jurisdiction using the tool;
  - Breadth of the coverage;
  - Standardization (e.g., does it use standard methods, etc.);
  - Level of effort to adapt the tool to Washington State; and
  - Consistency with other State tools/methods (e.g., state inventory).
- 5.4. Members discussed that tools are evolving rapidly and we don’t want to be “locked in” to certain tools.
- 5.5. Members also discussed the importance of good tools for measuring transportation emissions, because they are such a big contributor to greenhouse gas emissions in the state.
- 5.6. Members discussed the extent to which the SEPA IWG should 1) recommend a particular set of tools to be used statewide, 2) provide resources to allow lead agencies and project proponents to identify appropriate tools, or 3) should simply let lead agencies and project proponents identify tools themselves.
- 5.7. The “sense of the group” was that the SEPA IWG should seek to provide some statewide consistency in what tools are used, but some members felt that the IWG should stop short of recommending particular tools. In addition to some statewide consistency, some members discussed also allowing project proponents to use their own customized approach to measurement if appropriate.
- 5.8. The homework assignment on tools was to refine the list of “performance criteria” dealing with functionality and other characteristics (see above) and apply them to the list of tools. The goal would be to winnow the list of tools to a smaller list of tools that seem most appropriate for particular uses.
- 5.9. Members suggested that the SEPA IWG subgroup working on tools coordinate with the Transportation IWG subgroup on transportation tools. Carol Lee Roalkvam, Megan White agreed to follow-up on this with other WSDOT staff.

## 6. Threshold Determination for Greenhouse Gas Emissions

- 6.1. SEPA members and technical staff Annie Szvetcz, Matt Kuharic, Jim Wilder, Dick Settle and Hilary Franz presented an overview of approaches for threshold determination under SEPA.

- 6.2. The group discussed whether or not it is part of the SEPA IWG mandate to develop statewide guidance or standards for significance or some other type of statewide consistency.
  - 6.3. There was a “sense of the group” that some type of statewide consistency to threshold determination was important. The group discussed three possible approaches to statewide consistency, each with a different level of discretion for local agencies:
    - A statewide standard or guidance,
    - A state-wide framework (possibly including a range of possible standards); and
    - A procedural requirement that local agencies develop their own standards.
  - 6.4. Participants talked about what reference points could be used to establish a statewide standard or framework, such as the state’s greenhouse gas reduction goals.
  - 6.5. Participants also noted that the approach to determining “significance” was linked to the question of mitigation.
  - 6.6. One member noted that there are not statewide standards for other aspects of SEPA, and the establishment of one for climate change would break new ground.
  - 6.7. As a homework assignment, the threshold subgroup agreed to further describe the options for state-wide consistency and bring them back to the full group for consideration.
7. Updates on Other SEPA IWG Work
- 7.1. Carry Porter, from the Washington Attorney General’s Office presented a brief overview of what approaches California, Massachusetts, and King County are taking to mitigation and what types of mitigation are considered appropriate in those jurisdictions.
  - 7.2. Brendan McFarland, Ecology, presented an update on the work of the Leveraging SEPA for Climate Friendly Development subgroup. The group will continue its discussion of this topic and Brendan will provide a table listing the ideas for the larger group to consider. Any ideas for consideration should be emailed to Brendan to include in the table.
  - 7.3. SEPA IWG member Michael Robinson-Dorn provided an overview of resources he has collected about the predicted impacts of climate changes in Washington State.

### Steps Forward

- Tom will distribute a copy of the final “status update” memo to the CAT from the SEPA IWG Co-leads.
- Tom will work with the co-leads to develop a one-page summary describing the SEPA IWG voting process that will be distributed to the group.
- Interested SEPA IWG members and technical staff will work on the following homework assignments:
  - Developing options for “go broad” and “go narrow” approaches to measurement.
  - Applying functionality and other performance criteria to the list of measurement tools.
  - Developing options for statewide consistency to threshold determination.

### Next Meeting

The next SEPA IWG meeting will be a teleconference on July 23rd from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.